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ABSTRACT

The Illinois Rural Planning Council spent 1 year developing four task force reports assessing the needs of the state's rural areas and developing solutions to rural problems. The task force reports are principally directed to the Governor and the State Legislature, although the recommendations may be used by federal and state agencies wishing to ensure that their funds and programs are in line with actual rural needs. The objective of the Illinois Rural Revitalization Planning Program is development of comprehensive planning for rural development, especially with regard to the unemployed, those with low family incomes, and minorities. The program is a collaborative interagency process, plus 53 representatives of business, government, and citizen groups who act as the advisory body of the Rural Revitalization Planning Program. This last group, the Illinois Rural Planning Council, was subdivided into the four task forces: natural resources and the environment, human and social services, jobs and the economy, and housing and community development. The final result, a rural strategy for Illinois, will be made an integral part of the Governor's program to strengthen community development and economic vitality. A listing of the specific policies and recommendations by the task forces comprise the majority of the document. (Author/BRR)

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The Revitalization of
Rural Illinois

REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE
ILLINOIS RURAL PLANNING COUNCIL

ED225716

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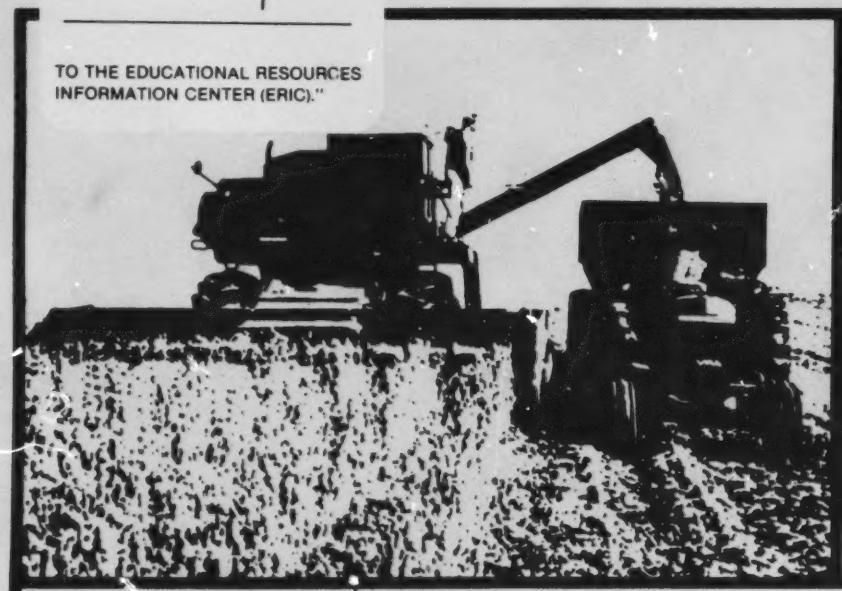
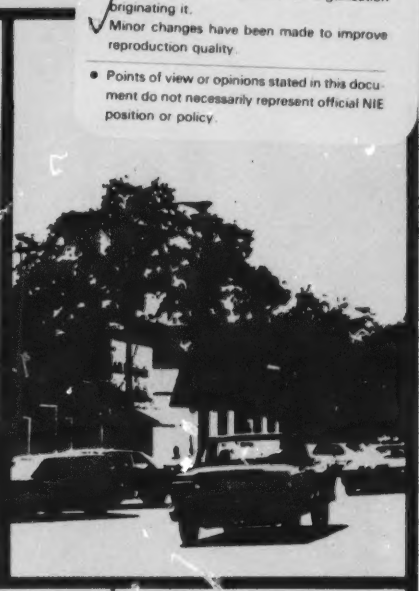
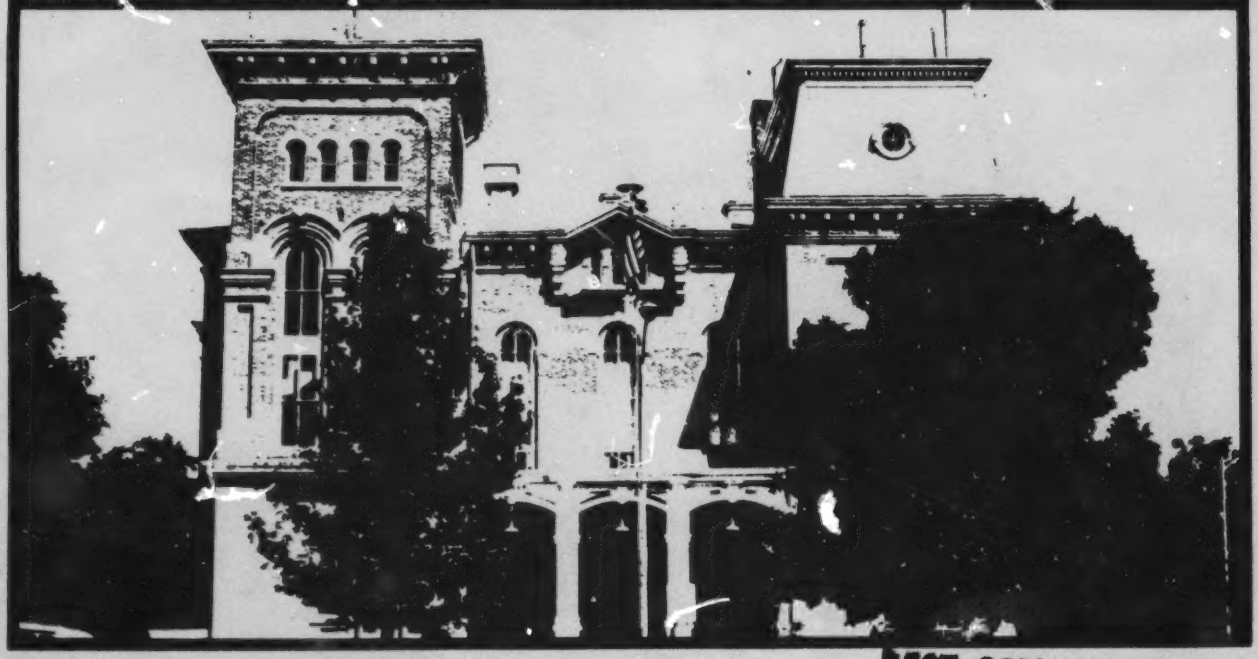
October 1979







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ABSTRACT

The Illinois Rural Revitalization Planning Program

The objective of the Illinois Rural Revitalization Planning Program is the development of comprehensive planning for rural development, especially with regard to the unemployed, those with low family incomes, and minorities. The program is a collaborative interagency process involving cooperation among staffs in the Department of Local Government Affairs, the Bureau of the Budget, and the Department of Agriculture. The final result, a rural strategy for Illinois, will be made an integral part of the Governor's recently announced program to strengthen community development and economic vitality.

During autumn, 1978, the Governor's Office invited fifty-three representatives of business, government, and citizen groups to act as the advisory body of the Rural Revitalization Planning Program. The mission of this group, the Illinois Rural Planning Council, is to assess the needs of the state's rural areas and to develop solutions to rural problems with the aid of the staffs of the three cooperating state agencies.

The Council was subdivided into four task forces: (1) Natural Resources and the Environment, (2) Human and Social Services, (3) Jobs and the Economy, and (4) Housing and Community Development. Each task force was asked to begin a review of the problems of rural areas. Since that time, each task force has conducted a series of meetings and interviews. Resource persons, as well as visitors and commentators from outside of the Planning Council itself, have been welcome to participate.

It is now a year since the formation of the Council, and the final reports of the four task forces are ready for distribution. The reports are directed in particular to the Governor and the State Legislature. While this audience is of principle concern, Council recommendations may be used as a strategy for statewide investment by federal and state agencies who wish to ensure their funds and programs are in line with actual rural needs.

Accompanying this summary is a listing of the specific policies and recommendations suggested by the task forces.

Natural Resources and the Environment

The Task Force decided to direct its efforts to the issue of the preservation of prime agricultural land. Private owners in Illinois at this time are under enormous pressures to convert their agricultural lands to other uses. The Task Force feels that we must preserve our high-quality land and maintain the agricultural infrastructure, because it is the base of a viable economic concern to the people of Illinois, the United States, and the entire world.

The Task Force recommends the State of Illinois develop and implement a generalized framework to guide and coordinate the use of natural resources and the use of land throughout the state, and also asks for legislation requiring counties to address the preservation of the prime farmland in their jurisdictions.

In addition, the Task Force suggests several implementation strategies. These include the completion of the county soil surveys. Further, inasmuch as there exists no central data base of the state's resources, a state report or budget of natural resources in Illinois should be developed.

Mine subsidence on Illinois lands where underground mining has occurred is an additional problem, with possible critical consequences for the preservation of prime agricultural land. For this reason, the Task Force recommends the acceptance of reclamation costs by coal mining companies.

Finally, the Task Force sought to discourage the conversion of prime agricultural land by recommending changes in taxation policy.

Jobs and the Economy

The Task Force identified two major problem areas in terms of economic development — retention and preparation. The Task Force feels that retention of existing business is the first priority in terms of economic development in rural areas, whether or not the community is seeking further economic development in the near future. In addition, there are communities in rural Illinois that are not prepared, or preparing, for economic development.

Among other things, the Task Force recommends a coordinated regional economic development project as a demonstration of private and public cooperation in rural Illinois.

Rural area manpower training needs could be more effectively served if there were greater coordination among service providers, including CETA prime sponsors, the Bureau of Employment Security, community colleges, and secondary vocational education efforts.

The Task Force suggests study to improve the role of vocational centers and community colleges in manpower training.

Alcohol fuels produced from domestic renewable resources have been determined to be the only alternative energy source which will be able to make a significant contribution to liquid fuel needs by 1985. The state, with a few exceptions, has not been actively promoting alcohol fuel production and use.

Economic development of alcohol fuels production in many rural areas is constrained by several factors that may be operating individually or collectively. These constraints include environmental restrictions, inability to fund development efforts without reducing needed services, and fear of community lifestyle disruption.

The Task Force cites a need for greater cooperation and coordination among all state agencies involved directly and indirectly with alcohol fuel production. Without this coordination and cooperation, promoting and supporting alcohol fuel production will be much more difficult.

Housing and Community Development

The Task Force recommendations chiefly concern the establishment of effective cooperation among federal, state, and local authorities in several major areas, including land use, program simplification, new housing, and HUD's Small Cities Program.

While there has been an attempt by state and federal agencies to increase the coordination of housing and community development programs, much needs to be done among federal, state, and local authorities if available resources are to be efficiently targeted into the most needy areas of the state.

Land use policy is also an important aspect of housing and community development programs, and the Task Force wishes to encourage communities in their efforts at compact development.

Housing and community development regulations are often confusing and difficult to understand, especially for small-town officials, and the Task Force encourages the simplification of procedures, forms, and regulations.

To increase the availability of new housing in rural areas, the Task Force recommends, among other suggestions, state-funded rural housing and community development projects.

Finally, the Task Force would like to see changes in the administration of HUD's Small Cities Program in order to strengthen the state role.

Human and Social Services

Many rural areas in Illinois have a severe lack of available and accessible health care. The categories of primary care services in which Illinois shows shortages appear to be primarily physician and dentist services, home health care, preventive services and emergency medical services in certain areas. The Task Force encourages the use of group practices to attract and hold health practitioners in rural Illinois, and recommends changes in state law

to allow physician assistants and nurse practitioners a wider latitude in their ability to practice. The Task Force examined the policy of deinstitutionalization in mental health care, and encourages the State of Illinois to achieve the most equitable distribution of funds between institutions and community-based services, especially for rural Illinois.

In regard to the elderly, the Task Force showed great concern for income maintenance. The Task Force believes that property taxes are a financial burden for many of the elderly of Illinois and that increased utility costs are causing financial problems for some individuals. To overcome this, the Task Force recommends use of programs such as circuit breaker tax relief to provide financial assistance to the elderly and endorses the concept of "Lifeline" legislation.

Other Task Force recommendations cover a broad range of services. For instance, in order to prevent the duplication of services, the Task Force recommends cooperative efforts among Public Aid, Aging, and Children and Family Services in the provision of housekeeping and homemaking services. To provide better day care in rural Illinois, the Task Force recommends the Department of Children and Family Services examine its policies toward licensing and reimbursement for day care.

In some rural counties, social service agencies, such as Head Start, the Senior Citizens Center, and the agency for the handicapped, may all have separate transportation systems. The lack of coordination among these scattered transportation systems may result in either service duplication or service gaps. The Task Force suggests the coordination of rural transportation services by gubernatorial action, cooperation among state agency directors, or legislative action.

Finally, after analysis of state human services, the Task Force believes the state could better serve its citizens by consolidating the numerous human services agencies into fewer agencies.

natural resources and the environment

Natural Resources And The Agricultural Land Base

POLICIES

A. THE STATE GUIDE AND COORDINATE THE USE OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND LAND STATEWIDE.

B. COUNTIES DEVELOP POLICIES REGARDING THE DEVELOPMENT AND USE OF THE NATURAL RESOURCES AND LAND IN THEIR JURISDICTION.

C. STATE AGENCIES INCORPORATE THE NEED TO PRESERVE AGRICULTURAL LANDS AND THE AGRICULTURAL INFRASTRUCTURE IN THEIR POLICIES, RULES AND REGULATIONS.

PROBLEMS

The State of Illinois is blessed with a great amount of natural resources--water, minerals, climate, etc.--of which the land is an absolute base. Upon this wealthy land base we have the superstructure of our society: housing, transportation, commerce and industry, mining, recreation, and perhaps most significant, agriculture. We must protect all our resources. Today and in the future, we must mandate that consideration be given to preservation and conservation of agricultural land as a renewable natural resource before the conversion of these lands to alternative uses. We must consider the land's value to society.

The economic impact of agriculture on Illinois is staggering. Twenty-five percent of the State's gross economic product is attributed to agriculture and its directly related industries! Illinois leads the nation in total agricultural exports--this must be preserved. Since land for agriculture can continually be reused for production, and since worldwide demand for food and fiber continues to grow, we must move to preserve and conserve this valuable Illinois resource.

Since World War II, Illinois land in farms has steadily declined at an average rate of about 100,000 acres per year. This substantial loss of farmlands is the equivalent of about eight average-sized Illinois counties! If this trend continues, the state will lose the equivalent of another five or six counties by the turn of the century. The supply of land most suitable for farming is finite and conversion of agricultural land may permanently damage farming as a viable economic concern in Illinois.

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The Soil Conservation Service of the United States Department of Agriculture has classified lands in capability classes from Class I to Class VIII based upon the best combinations of physical and chemical characteristics soils have for producing food and fiber. We recommend the state develop policies to preserve Classes I and II and other lands of statewide importance to agriculture, conserve Classes III, IV, and V and mandate consideration of consequences before conversion of Classes VI, VII, and VIII. The state's guidelines would be implemented at the local governmental level.

Private owners in Illinois at this time are under enormous pressures to convert their agricultural lands to other uses. We must preserve our high-quality land and maintain the agricultural infrastructure, because it is the base for a viable economic concern to the people of Illinois, the United States, and the entire world. Many people and institutions need to be involved in the process of agricultural land preservation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

TO THE GOVERNOR OF ILLINOIS, THROUGH THE ILLINOIS RURAL PLANNING COUNCIL, THE TASK FORCE ON NATURAL RESOURCES AND THE ENVIRONMENT RECOMMENDS FOR LEGISLATION:

A. REQUIRE THE STATE OF ILLINOIS TO DEVELOP POLICY PROVIDING A GENERALIZED FRAMEWORK TO GUIDE AND COORDINATE THE USE OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND THE USE OF LAND THROUGHOUT THE STATE.

B. REQUIRE THE COUNTIES OF THIS STATE TO DEVELOP POLICIES:

1) TO ADDRESS THE USE OF NATURAL RESOURCES IN THEIR JURISDICTION BECAUSE THE NATURAL RESOURCES OF A COUNTY ARE ALSO THE STATE'S RESOURCES;

2) TO GUIDE THE DEVELOPMENT OF HOUSING, TRANSPORTATION, COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY, MINING, RECREATION, AGRICULTURE, EDUCATION, CULTURAL AMENITIES, SEWAGE COLLECTION AND TREATMENT, AND WATER SUPPLY AND DISTRIBUTION;

3) TO PROVIDE FOR THE PROTECTION AND PRESERVATION OF PRIME AGRICULTURAL LAND (AS DEFINED BY THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COOPERATIVE SOIL SURVEY PROGRAM) AND OTHER FARMLANDS OF STATEWIDE IMPORTANCE;

4) TO ADDRESS CONSERVATION OF CLASSES III, IV, AND V AGRICULTURAL LANDS;

5) TO CONSIDER THE CONSEQUENCES BEFORE CONVERSION OF CLASSES VI, VII, AND VIII AGRICULTURAL LANDS;

6) TO PERIODICALLY REVIEW, UPDATE, OR CONFIRM THE COUNTY POLICIES FOR DEVELOPMENT, AS WELL AS ANY ORDINANCES AND REGULATIONS, TO ACCOUNT FOR UNANTICIPATED NEEDS, OPPORTUNITIES, CHANGING GROWTH RATES, OR NEW FACILITIES OR PRIORITIES;

7) TO NAME A DEPARTMENT AT THE COUNTY LEVEL TO COORDINATE LOCAL POLICIES, ORDINANCES AND REGULATIONS.

C. REQUIRE AGENCIES OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS TO INCORPORATE INTO THEIR RATIONALE FOR POLICIES, RULES, AND REGULATIONS, THE NEED TO PRESERVE THE AGRICULTURAL LANDS AND AGRICULTURAL INFRASTRUCTURE OF THIS STATE AS A VIABLE ECONOMIC CONCERN. THIS DIRECTIVE MIGHT BE IMPLEMENTED BY AN EXECUTIVE ORDER BY THE GOVERNOR PRIOR TO LEGISLATION.

Implementation Strategies

Soil Surveys

POLICY

INITIATE AND/OR COMPLETE DETAILED SOIL SURVEYS IN ALL COUNTIES IN ILLINOIS.

PROBLEMS

While the foregoing recommendations call for specific legislative action, a special appropriation bill is necessary for completion of soil surveys of the counties of Illinois. Many soil surveys remain uncompleted, and they could serve several useful functions in the process of agricultural land preservation.

- Identification of prime farmlands and other farmlands of statewide importance. Environmental impact statements, prepared by many agencies using federal funds for their activities, must now discuss the impact of proposed projects on prime farmlands. The assessment includes identification of prime farmlands for all alternatives.

- Land Use planning. City, county, regional, and state planning groups use soils information as one of the basic components for determining land suitability and treatment needs for planned land uses. Section 208 of the Water Pollution Control Act has had an accelerating affect.

- Reclamation and conservation plans in surface mining areas. Enactment of the Illinois Surface-Mined Land Conservation and Reclamation Act as amended, effective July 1, 1975, requires the use of soil surveys for determining land capable of row crop agriculture.

- Resource conservation planning. Soil surveys provide the basic soil information for planning resource management systems that control erosion and reduce sediment. Soil and water conservation needs on all lands have increased along with the intensification of agricultural production.

- Tax assessment of rural lands. With the increased valuation of land, and because of the new farmland assessment law, more counties are utilizing soil surveys for developing equitable assessment procedures.

- Waste disposal. Soil surveys provide information as to the suitability of different kinds of soils for septic tank filter fields and sewage lagoons. Soil information also supplements geologic information in locating suitable sanitary landfill sites. Increased needs and concern for protecting the environment have increased the use of this kind of soil information.

- Soil surveys provide information for a number of other uses including installation of drainage systems, design of irrigation systems, layout of local roads and streets, land appraisal, recreational developments and application of fertilizers, herbicides and pesticides.

RECOMMENDATION

IN ORDER TO INITIATE AND/OR COMPLETE DETAILED SOIL SURVEYS IN ALL COUNTIES IN ILLINOIS, THE TASK FORCE RECOMMENDS:

A SPECIAL APPROPRIATION BILL BE WRITTEN TO SUPPORT STATE FUNDING TO ASSIST IN THE COMPLETION OF DETAILED SOIL SURVEYS IN ILLINOIS.

A Natural Resources Budget

POLICY

ESTABLISH A CENTRAL DATA BASE OF THE STATE'S RESOURCES.

PROBLEM

Inasmuch as there exists no central data base of the State's Resources, a state report or budget of natural resources in Illinois should be developed in a format which will allow the citizens of the State of Illinois to understand how our expenditures balance against our income and reserves of natural resources, to understand how government, the private sector, and the individual are allocating natural resources today, and to foster public discussion of how our economy and society can best utilize the finite natural resources available in Illinois.

A budget of this kind would be helpful for several reasons. A budget is a way of allocating resources to achieve some set of goals, and assures attention to priorities. A budget lets us set down where we want to go, how much we are willing to give to get there, the relative importance of various goals, and how our expenditures stack up against our income.

A broad natural resources perspective, looking for a balanced approach to management problems, requires a budget we can understand. Though the budget would be crude, and hard to quantify at first, it is time we began:

- to look at the quantities of natural resources developed or consumed in Illinois;
- to look at the ratios of the resources we are importing, exporting, and those developed and used internally;
- to balance the resources we consume against the reserves or potential production we might expect in the future.

We could expect to learn a great deal from the budget process, just as we have learned from financial budgeting. Hopefully we would learn:

- how we are using our resources -- something about which we know amazingly little in 1979;
- how well we are using our resources;
- how our resource expenditures stack up against the present and future resources available to us.

Fiscal budgeting has come a long way in the last fifty years. As recently as 1921 the agencies of the federal government each made requests to the treasury for individual money, and a clerk would carry these requests to Congress for approval. There was no central direction by the President nor oversight review by the Congress. Today the budget is a relatively sophisticated tool for setting priorities.

Initially the data for a natural resources budget would be rough, and, if not used with care, could be misleading. The appropriate categories would have to be developed, but the attempt to construct such an instrument might itself produce better data.

The concept would be useful as an informational device, as a planning tool, and as a way to set priorities for what we want to accomplish. To a large extent our decisions are piecemeal, not because of feuding between agencies or an unwillingness to cooperate, but because we lack some action-forcing integrating mechanism.

A legislative mandate and wide political support will make or break the concept, and to be legitimate the natural resources budget, like the fiscal budget, must be recognized and used by the legislature.

To the extent possible the identification summary of Illinois' natural resources should include the following:

- indicate how Illinois budgets its natural resources by providing a quantitative description of Illinois' natural resource base;
- identify verifiable trends in natural resource development, use, consumption, conservation and preservation;
- provide a quantitative and qualitative description of the demands upon our natural resources from all sectors of our economy and society;
- identify and quantify the imports and exports of natural resources to and from Illinois;
- indicate the balance of the resources we consume against the reserves or potential production we might expect in the future.

RECOMMENDATION

IN ORDER TO ESTABLISH A CENTRAL DATA BASE OF THE STATE'S RESOURCES, THE TASK FORCE RECOMMENDS:

THE INSTITUTE OF NATURAL RESOURCES, WITH THE ASSISTANCE AND COOPERATION OF ALL STATE AGENCIES WITH RESPONSIBILITIES FOR MANAGEMENT OF THE STATE'S NATURAL RESOURCE BASE, BEGIN DEVELOPMENT OF AN ANNUAL REPORT ON THE STATUS OF THE NATURAL RESOURCES OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS REFLECTING HOW THE ECONOMY, GOVERNMENT, AND CITIZENS USE, DEVELOP AND CONSERVE OUR NATURAL RESOURCES.

Reclamation of Mined Lands

POLICY

MINING OF MINERALS IN ILLINOIS BE DONE IN A MANNER CONSISTENT WITH THE PRESERVATION AND CONSERVATION OF PRIME AGRICULTURAL LANDS.

PROBLEMS

Coal is an important resource to Illinois, with total reserves estimated at 161 billion tons by the Illinois State Geological Survey. The coal industry is important to the Illinois economy. It not only provides jobs for Illinoisans, but may be looked upon to help solve our nation's energy crisis. The coal industry is presently heavily affected by environmental regulations. As the Task Force on Natural Resources, we do not wish to encourage unnecessary regulation. Regulation increases the cost of production of coal, and increases the inflation in our economy.

Prime agricultural lands are also a valuable resource to Illinois. Mine subsidence on Illinois lands where underground mining has occurred is a serious problem, with possible critical consequences for the future. Recent subsidences have occurred in O'Fallon, Belleville, Macoupin County, Maryville, Berlin, and Seneca, Illinois. Subsidence affects this state's food production and thousands of homes and industrial buildings. In 1977, the United States Congress recognized a need to return prime agricultural farmland to production after it had been surface mined when it passed the Federal Surface Mining and Reclamation Act. We realize that the cost of returning mined land to row crops is expensive, and may be as much as $8,000 per acre as estimated by Peabody Coal Company. We feel that the costs of reclamation are worth the preservation of a limited resource such as prime farmland.

RECOMMENDATIONS

IN ORDER TO ENSURE THAT THE MINING OF MINERALS IN ILLINOIS IS DONE IN A MANNER CONSISTENT WITH THE PRESERVATION AND CONSERVATION OF PRIME AGRICULTURAL LANDS, THE TASK FORCE RECOMMENDS:

1) THE STATE DEVELOP A STRONG POLICY TO ADDRESS THE LONG-TERM CONSEQUENCES OF SUBSIDENCES AND TO PROVIDE FOR PROPER RECOMPENSE FROM THE MINING COMPANIES.

2) STRICT STATE RECLAMATION STANDARDS BE DEVELOPED FOR STRIP-MINING OF COAL, SAND, GRAVEL, SILICA, OR OTHER MATERIALS; INDIVIDUALS, COMPANIES, OR CORPORATIONS ASSOCIATED WITH MINING ACCEPT RESPONSIBILITIES FOR MEETING THESE RECLAMATION STANDARDS.

Food Quality and Nutrition

POLICY

ENDORSE THE EFFORTS OF GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES IN THEIR EFFORTS TO PROTECT ALL CONSUMERS OF FOODSTUFFS.

PROBLEMS

The Natural Resources Task Force takes an interest in preserving the health of Illinois citizens. The function of the Illinois Bureau of Meat and Poultry Inspection is the protection of the consumer as concerns the wholesomeness and identification of meat and poultry products. The coverage includes all phases of intrastate production from antemortem inspection of the animals, through slaughter and processing, to the retail level.

The Food and Drug Administration sets high standards for the types of food additives and chemicals that can be used in agricultural production. We feel Illinois producers must make use of the technological advancements in feeds and fertilizers that are necessary to meet the demand for food, but we would never advocate the use of compounds that would jeopardize the health of consumers.

RECOMMENDATION

IN ORDER TO ENDORSE THE EFFORTS OF GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES IN THEIR EFFORTS TO PROTECT ALL CONSUMERS OF FOODSTUFFS, THE TASK FORCE RECOMMENDS:

THE STATE OF ILLINOIS CONTINUE TO SUPPORT THE ONGOING EFFORTS OF THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, THE FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION, AND THE ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE IN THEIR WORK ON A NUTRITIONAL STANDARDS POLICY, RULES AND REGULATIONS, AND INSPECTION AND ANALYSIS OF FOODSTUFFS.

The Role of the Department of Agriculture

POLICY

THE GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS DESIGNATE THE ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE TO BE THE LEAD AGENCY FOR THE PRESERVATION OF AGRICULTURAL LANDS IN THE STATE.

PROBLEM

While the stated policy of the State of Illinois is to preserve prime agricultural land, no single agency is charged with ensuring compliance with this policy throughout State government.

RECOMMENDATION

URGE THE GOVERNOR OF ILLINOIS TO DESIGNATE THE ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE TO BE THE LEAD AGENCY FOR THE PRESERVATION OF AGRICULTURAL LANDS IN THE STATE. THE DIRECTOR OF AGRICULTURE WOULD IMPLEMENT THE PRESERVATION OF AGRICULTURAL LANDS AS FOLLOWS:

1) THE DIRECTOR OF AGRICULTURE WOULD DEVELOP INTERAGENCY AGREEMENTS TO IMPROVE DIALOG BETWEEN THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND ALL AGENCIES THAT MAKE LAND ACQUISITIONS IN ORDER TO UPDATE THEIR RATIONALE REGARDING CONVERSIONS OF AGRICULTURAL LANDS. THIS DIALOG WOULD CONSIST OF (1) ADVISING OR PARTICIPATING IN LAND USE PLANNING INITIATIVES OF VARIOUS COUNTIES, AND (2) MONITORING BOTH LAND ACQUISITIONS BY STATE AGENCIES AND LAND ACQUISITIONS BY UNITS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT WITH STATE OR FEDERAL FUNDING, FOR COMPLIANCE WITH THE AGRICULTURAL LAND PRESERVATION POLICY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS. THIS DIALOG WOULD HOPEFULLY IMPROVE THE INITIAL PLANNING, PRE-CONVERSION PHASE OF THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS.

2) THIS DIALOG WOULD LEAD TO THE CREATION OF AN AGRICULTURAL ASSESSMENT MODEL THAT WOULD BE APPLIED TO ALL NEW PROJECTS THAT ARE FUNDED BY FEDERAL OR STATE DOLLARS AFTER THE EFFECTIVE DATE OF AN EXECUTIVE ORDER AND/OR PERMANENT LEGISLATION AUTHORIZING SUCH CREATION.

Taxation Policy and Conversion of Agricultural Land

POLICY

ENCOURAGE THE NON-CONVERSION OF PRIME AGRICULTURAL LAND.

PROBLEM

In 1977, a new Farmland Assessment Act was passed and became law. It requires use of a formula based on the 3-year average value per acre of crops and livestock sold in the county, the 3-year average value of corn, soybeans, wheat and hay produced per acre in the county, and 10 percent of the value of the farm real estate for the same three years. Additionally, farmland of lesser value than the highest or best grade within the county is valued for assessment purposes based upon its productivity by use of soil maps, productivity indices and all other available data. Consideration is given to the actual use for purposes such as row crops, woodland, pasture and wasteland. In short, under this Act the most productive lands are the most taxed, thereby encouraging their sale and conversion to non-agricultural uses.

RECOMMENDATION

IN ORDER TO ENCOURAGE THE NON-CONVERSION OF PRIME AGRICULTURAL LAND, THE TASK FORCE RECOMMENDS:

TAX INCENTIVES BE DEVELOPED TO ENCOURAGE URBAN DEVELOPMENT ON LESS PRODUCTIVE LAND AND DISCOURAGE URBAN DEVELOPMENT ON THE MORE PRODUCTIVE AGRICULTURAL LAND.

POLICY

DISTRIBUTE SALES TAX REVENUE EQUITABLY BETWEEN MUNICIPALITIES AND COUNTIES.

PROBLEM

If a business is created in a county on the fringe area of a municipality, 1% of the sales tax revenue from that business goes to the county. Later, if the municipality annexes the property where the business is located, the 1% sales tax revenue now must go to the municipality. On many occasions the counties have sued the municipalities to prohibit annexation and the loss of the tax revenue base. Associated with this problem is the disparity in development standards and property tax burdens in municipalities versus counties, and the equitable dispersal of funds to provide services.

RECOMMENDATION

IN ORDER TO DISTRIBUTE SALES TAX REVENUE EQUITABLY BETWEEN MUNICIPALITIES AND COUNTIES, THE TASK FORCE RECOMMENDS:

THE STATE OF ILLINOIS DEVELOP A PROCEDURE FOR SALES TAX MONIES TO BE DISTRIBUTED EQUITABLY BETWEEN MUNICIPALITIES AND COUNTIES IN ORDER TO ALLEVIATE THE ADVERSARY POSITION IN COMPETITION FOR LOCAL REVENUE AND DEVELOPMENT BETWEEN CITIES AND COUNTIES.

POLICY

ENCOURAGE DEVELOPMENT AND REDEVELOPMENT OF UNUSED URBAN REAL ESTATE.

PROBLEM

The Natural Resources Task Force feels that the most economical use of natural resources requires the renovation of unused residential, urban, and industrial lands. Typically the cost of redeveloping urban land is greater than the cost of developing rural areas. Present laws treat the cost of razing unused structures as part of the total capitalization of the project to be depreciated later. To encourage the construction of residences and industrial buildings in urban areas, we feel the developer should be allowed to "expense out" the cost of destruction of existing unused structures. This would be an attempt to discourage "leapfrog" development at the fringe of municipalities.

RECOMMENDATION

IN ORDER TO ENCOURAGE DEVELOPMENT AND REDEVELOPMENT OF UNUSED URBAN REAL ESTATE, THE TASK FORCE RECOMMENDS:

THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT CHANGE FEDERAL LAWS TO ENCOURAGE REDEVELOPMENT OF UNUSED URBAN REAL ESTATE BY ALLOWING DEVELOPERS TO "EXPENSE OUT" COSTS OF REMOVING EXISTING STRUCTURES.

jobs and the economy

Economic Development

POLICIES

A. ENCOURAGE RURAL COMMUNITIES TO MAKE RETENTION OF EXISTING BUSINESSES THE FIRST PRIORITY IN TERMS OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, WHETHER OR NOT THE COMMUNITY IS SEEKING FURTHER DEVELOPMENT.

B. AID INTERESTED RURAL COMMUNITIES IN THEIR PREPARATION FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.

PROBLEMS

The Task Force has identified two major problem areas in terms of economic development -- retention and preparation. The Task Force feels that retention of existing businesses is the first priority in terms of economic development in rural areas, whether or not the community is seeking further economic development in the near future.

Preparation for economic development by interested communities is the other area of concern. There are communities in rural Illinois that are not prepared, or preparing, for economic development. This is reflected in the low level of participation in economic development programs.

The Task Force has identified two reasons for this. First, some communities may be interested in economic development, but are not aware of what assistance is available, and from what sources. Second, other communities are just not interested. Some are satisfied just the way they are, while others cannot afford to take funding from needed services and put it in an economic development effort.

While the Task Force feels that the issues of workman's compensation and unemployment insurance are important to rural areas, they were not examined because other groups were looking at those issues at the same time.

RECOMMENDATIONS

IN ORDER TO ENCOURAGE RETENTION OF EXISTING BUSINESSES, AND TO AID INTERESTED RURAL COMMUNITIES IN THEIR PREPARATION FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, THE TASK FORCE RECOMMENDS:

1. THE STATE OF ILLINOIS DESIGN A COORDINATED REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEMONSTRATION PROJECT IN RURAL ILLINOIS. BY USING A REGIONAL PLANNING AGENCY AS THE COORDINATING AGENCY, THE PROJECT SHOULD BRING TOGETHER THE VARIOUS SERVICES THAT STATE AND FEDERAL AGENCIES CAN SUPPLY TO AID ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS IN THE REGION'S COMMUNITIES. THE PRIVATE SECTOR—LOCAL BUSINESSES, UTILITY COMPANIES, RAILROADS, AND OTHER INDUSTRIES WHICH WOULD HAVE AN INTEREST IN SEEING THAT AREA DEVELOP - SHOULD ALSO BE INVOLVED. THE FIRST PRIORITY SHOULD BE THE RETENTION OF EXISTING INDUSTRY. THIS PROJECT WOULD ALSO INCLUDE ASSISTING THE COMMUNITIES IN TAKING STOCK OF THEIR RESOURCES, INCLUDING LOCAL BUSINESSES, PEOPLE, SOIL, MINERAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES, AS WELL AS A DETERMINATION OF CURRENT AND FUTURE TRENDS AND NEEDS.

2. THE ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CONDUCT INDUSTRIAL PREPAREDNESS WORKSHOPS IN THE REMAINING REGIONS OF THE STATE.

3. THE ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INVESTIGATE THE POSSIBILITY OF OBTAINING SPACE ON A REGULAR BASIS FOR AN ARTICLE OR ARTICLES IN THE ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS PUBLICATION, "LGA REPORTS". THE DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SHOULD ALSO INVESTIGATE THE POSSIBILITY OF CONTRIBUTING ARTICLES TO PUBLICATIONS OF OTHER GROUPS SUCH AS THE URBAN COUNTIES COUNCIL, ILLINOIS TOWNSHIP OFFICIALS, AND THE ILLINOIS MUNICIPAL LEAGUE. ARTICLES SHOULD APPEAR REGULARLY SO AS TO KEEP THE INDUSTRIAL PREPAREDNESS PROGRAM CONTINUALLY IN FRONT OF LOCAL OFFICIALS.

Manpower Training

POLICIES

A. INCREASE PARTICIPATION OF RURAL, LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS AND ORGANIZATIONS IN MANPOWER PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING.

B. PROVIDE MANPOWER TRAINING IN RURAL AREAS TO MEET ACTUAL AND ANTICIPATED MANPOWER NEEDS.

C. ENSURE THE FULL AND EFFECTIVE USE OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND FACILITIES AND THE FULL INTEGRATION OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT.

PROBLEMS

Some rural communities are not participating in manpower planning and programming efforts due to a lack of understanding of the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) by rural local government officials.

There is a significant potential in rural areas for facility and program duplication, as well as gaps and uncertainty because there is no comprehensive manpower planning effort.

Rural area training needs could be more effectively served if there were greater coordination among manpower service providers, including CETA prime sponsors, the Bureau of Employment Security, community colleges, and secondary vocational education efforts.

Rural communities tend to have very specialized local economies, and the closing of a single industry or mine would have much more of an impact on a rural community than on a more diversified urban community. There is, however, no plan to deal with the manpower impacts of plant closings in rural areas.

Some rural areas find it difficult to support comprehensive vocational education programs due to a lack of financial resources.

RECOMMENDATIONS

A. IN ORDER TO IMPROVE THE PROVISION OF MANPOWER TRAINING TO RURAL AREAS OF THE STATE, THE TASK FORCE RECOMMENDS:

1. THE GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF MANPOWER AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT TAKE THE FOLLOWING STEPS RELATED TO THE USE OF 4 PERCENT CETA FUNDS FOR RURAL AREAS:

   - o DEVELOP POLICY GUIDELINES FOR THE USE OF THE FUNDS;
   - o EXPAND THE DISTRIBUTION OF REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS;
   - o CONSIDER TWO PROJECTS FOR FUNDING: PROVIDE LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS WITH ADDITIONAL UNDERSTANDING OF THE OPPORTUNITIES UNDER CETA AND ASSESS HOW TO BEST MEET THE VOCATIONAL EDUCATION NEEDS OF RURAL AREAS, PARTICULARLY THOSE AREAS NOT COVERED BY AN AREA VOCATIONAL CENTER.

2. THE STATE INITIATE A COMPREHENSIVE MANPOWER PLANNING EFFORT.

3. THE ILLINOIS EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING COUNCIL SURVEY MANPOWER SERVICE PROVIDERS TO DETERMINE THEIR INTEREST IN A DEMONSTRATION PROJECT TO TEST THE FEASIBILITY OF REGIONAL PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING.

4. ALL CETA PRIME SPONSORS BE ENCOURAGED TO SUPPLY DATA NECESSARY FOR STATE LEVEL ASSESSMENT EFFORTS AND TO TAKE STEPS TO COLLECT DATA ON A CONSISTENT BASIS.

5. THE STATE INVESTIGATE WHETHER STATE LEGISLATION SHOULD BE ENACTED TO REQUIRE THE DISCLOSURE TO THE STATE OF DATA BY PRIVATE, VOCATIONAL PROPRIETARY SCHOOLS.

6. THE STATE DEVELOP AN ACTION PLAN TO DEAL WITH THE IMPACT OF PLANT CLOSINGS.

7. THE STATE MAKE A CONCERTED EFFORT TO RECEIVE FEDERAL FUNDS WHICH MAY BECOME AVAILABLE UNDER SEVERAL CETA DEMONSTRATION PROGRAMS WHICH FOCUS ON DISTRESSED AREAS.

B. IN ORDER TO ENSURE THE FULL AND EFFECTIVE USE OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND FACILITIES AND THE FULL INTEGRATION OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, THE TASK FORCE RECOMMENDS:

THE STATE TAKE THE FOLLOWING ACTIONS:

1. INITITATE A DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM WHICH WOULD DEVELOP AN

AREA-WIDE PROGRAM AND FACILITIES PLAN FOR VOCATIONAL EDUCATION IN HIGH SCHOOLS, AREA VOCATIONAL CENTERS AND COMMUNITY COLLEGES;

2. IDENTIFY IMPEDIMENTS TO, AND INCENTIVES FOR, THE EFFICIENT USE OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION FACILITIES;

3. STUDY HOW BEST TO MEET THE VOCATIONAL EDUCATION NEEDS OF THE STATE'S RURAL AREAS, PARTICULARLY THOSE NOT CURRENTLY SERVED BY AN AREA VOCATIONAL CENTER;

4. TRAIN ADVISORY GROUPS IN THE VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AREA;

5. CONTINUE TO APPLY AND ENFORCE THE SUNSET CONCEPT AS PART OF THE STATE LEVEL PROCESS TO APPROVE AND EVALUATE VOCATIONAL EDUCATION COURSE OFFERINGS;

6. CONDUCT AN ONGOING ASSESSMENT AT THE STATE LEVEL OF "NEW" OCCUPATIONS AND THEIR TRAINING NEEDS;

7. ENCOURAGE GREATER FLEXIBILITY IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION TO FACILITATE INVOLVEMENT IN CETA PROGRAMS THROUGH SUCH APPROACHES AS THE DEVELOPMENT OF A TEACHER CO-OP TO SHARE VOCATIONAL EDUCATION TEACHERS AMONG SCHOOL DISTRICTS, AND USE OF INSTRUCTORS FROM PRIVATE INDUSTRY.

Alcohol Fuels

POLICIES

A. ASSUME AND MAINTAIN A LEADERSHIP POSITION IN THE PRODUCTION OF ALCOHOL FUELS, BY SUPPORTING THE START-UP AND EXPANSION OF AN ALCOHOL FUELS INDUSTRY IN ILLINOIS.

B. ENCOURAGE THE DEVELOPMENT OF ENERGY FROM RENEWABLE RESOURCES IN A MANNER WHICH IS CONSISTENT WITH ENVIRONMENTAL REGULATIONS AND PROPER SOIL CONSERVATION PRACTICES.

C. PROMOTE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND INCREASED EMPLOYMENT VIA ALCOHOL FUEL PRODUCTION IN THE RURAL AREAS OF ILLINOIS.

D. FACILITATE COOPERATION AND COORDINATION AMONG STATE AGENCIES, BETWEEN STATE AND FEDERAL AGENCIES, AND BETWEEN STATE AGENCIES AND PRIVATE INDUSTRY IN THE AREA OF ALCOHOL FUEL PRODUCTION.

E. FORMULATE LEGISLATION, EXECUTIVE ORDERS, DIRECTIVES, GUIDELINES, ETC., ON MATTERS PERTAINING TO ALCOHOL FUELS, WITH THE RECOGNITION THAT ALCOHOL PRODUCTION WILL BE CARRIED ON AT THREE DIFFERENT LEVELS - LARGE COMMERCIAL OPERATIONS (ATTACHED TO GRAIN PROCESSING FIRMS, FOR EXAMPLE); MEDIUM-SIZED OPERATIONS SUPPORTED BY SMALL TOWNS AND EVEN FARM COOPERATIVES; AND INDIVIDUAL FARM OPERATIONS.

PROBLEMS

The Task Force has identified several problem areas pertaining to alcohol fuels -- promotion and support, conservation and the environment, economic development, and government coordination and cooperation.

Alcohol fuels produced from domestic renewable resources have been determined to be the only alternative energy source which will be able to make a significant contribution to liquid fuel needs by 1985. The state, with a few exceptions, has not been actively promoting alcohol fuel production and use.

While the raw materials for alcohol production are abundant, the means of production are virtually non-existent. There is now, and will continue to be, a need for research in improving and promoting alcohol fuel production

and use.

Some firms in Illinois are encountering problems with environmental regulations on the disposal of waste streams. At present, there is little effort being made to encourage conversion (where possible) of these wastes into fuel and feed.

The use of crop residues and marginal or set-aside lands to obtain feedstock for alcohol production has the potential to increase soil erosion and loss of soil nutrients. Impairments to agricultural lands would have adverse effects on the state's ability to produce food, feed, and fiber; they also affect a very important source of income to the state, as well as the country's balance of trade.

Economic development in many rural areas is constrained by several factors that may be operating individually or collectively. These constraints include environmental restrictions, inability to fund development efforts without reducing needed services, and fear of community life style disruption. Most of these problems arise from the size of business or industry that might locate in rural areas.

There is a need for greater cooperation and coordination among all state agencies involved directly and indirectly with alcohol fuel production. Without this coordination and cooperation, promoting and supporting alcohol fuel production will be much more difficult.

RECOMMENDATIONS

A IN ORDER TO ENCOURAGE THE START-UP AND EXPANSION OF AN ALCOHOL FUELS INDUSTRY IN ILLINOIS, THE TASK FORCE RECOMMENDS:

THE STATE TAKE THE FOLLOWING ACTIONS:

1. ESTABLISH A SET OF QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE GOALS FOR THE PRODUCTION OF ALCOHOL BY INDIVIDUAL OPERATIONS, AND CORRESPONDING REWARDS FOR EXCEEDING THOSE GOALS;

2. ESTABLISH FUNDING FOR A STATEWIDE DEMONSTRATION PROJECT INVOLVING ALCOHOL PRODUCTION FROM VARIOUS FEEDSTOCKS, AND USING VARIOUS HEAT SOURCES;

3. ESTABLISH INCENTIVES FOR THE SUCCESSFUL DEVELOPMENT OF A CONTINUOUS PRODUCTION (AS OPPOSED TO PRESENT BATCH PRODUCTION) PROCESS FOR MANUFACTURING ALCOHOL;

4. DESIGN AND IMPLEMENT A PROGRAM IN THE AREA OF CONVERTING MUNICIPAL WASTES AND SLUDGE INTO FUEL SOURCES;

5. PROVIDE FUNDING UNDER STRINGENT GUIDELINES TO THE STATE UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES FOR RESEARCH IN BIOMASS;

6. PROVIDE FUNDING FOR DEVELOPING IMPROVEMENTS IN THE ALCOHOL PRODUCTION PROCESS.

B. IN ORDER TO WORK WITH ILLINOIS INDUSTRY IN CONVERTING WASTE STREAMS TO FUEL SOURCES, AND FURTHER ENCOURAGE ALCOHOL FUEL PRODUCTION, THE TASK FORCE RECOMMENDS:

THE STATE TAKE THE FOLLOWING ACTIONS:

1. CONDUCT A SURVEY OF ILLINOIS INDUSTRY TO IDENTIFY THOSE PLANTS WHICH HAVE WASTE STREAMS, OR DISTRESSED MATERIALS, WHICH COULD SERVE AS RAW MATERIAL INPUTS TO THE ALCOHOL PRODUCTION PROCESS;

2. SUPPORT RESEARCH IN, AND PROMOTE THE UTILIZATION OF, WASTE PRODUCTS (FOOD PROCESSING WASTES, DAIRY WASTES, OFF-GRADE GRAIN) AS RAW MATERIALS IN THE ALCOHOL PRODUCTION PROCESS;

3. PROVIDE INCENTIVES TO INDUSTRY FOR USE OF ALTERNATIVE ENERGY TECHNOLOGY IN THE HANDLING OF WASTE STREAMS.

C. IN ORDER TO DEVELOP ADDITIONAL MARKETS FOR ALCOHOL PRODUCED FROM RENEWABLE RESOURCES, THE TASK FORCE RECOMMENDS:

THE STATE TAKE THE FOLLOWING ACTIONS:

1. PROVIDE FUNDING FOR FURTHER RESEARCH DEALING WITH THE USE OF ETHANOL IN OTHER FUELS IN ADDITION TO GASOLINE (LOWER PROOF ALCOHOL, ALCOHOL AND WATER MIXTURES, DIESOHOL);

2. PROMOTE CONSUMER AWARENESS OF ALCOHOL PRODUCTION AND USE, AND OTHER RELEVANT ISSUES PERTAINING TO ALCOHOL FUELS;

3. SUPPORT FUNDING FOR RESEARCH INTO THE UTILIZATION OF DISTILLERS' DRIED GRAINS (A JOINT PRODUCT FROM THE PRODUCTION OF ALCOHOL FROM GRAIN);

4. ENCOURAGE AN ALCOHOL INDUSTRY CHECK-OFF (SIMILAR TO THE CURRENT CORN AND SOYBEAN CHECK-OFF PROGRAMS), HAVING THE ALCOHOL MANUFACTURERS CONTRIBUTE SOME SMALL AMOUNT PER GALLON OF ALCOHOL PRODUCED, TO HELP SUPPORT RESEARCH INTO ALCOHOL FUEL PRODUCTION AND USE;

5. ENCOURAGE CONTINUED OR INCREASED FUNDING FOR THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE'S NORTHERN REGIONAL RESEARCH CENTER, IN PEORIA, ILLINOIS, PARTICULARLY FOR RESEARCH IN ALCOHOL PRODUCTION AND USE, AND IN DEVELOPING NEW MARKETS AND USES FOR THE JOINT PRODUCTS OF THE ALCOHOL CONVERSION PROCESS.

D. IN ORDER TO PROMOTE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT THROUGH ALCOHOL PRODUCTION IN RURAL AREAS, THE TASK FORCE RECOMMENDS:

1. THAT EMPHASIS CONTINUE TO BE GIVEN TO SMALL-SCALE ALCOHOL PRODUCTION OPERATIONS, AND THE POTENTIAL SUCH OPERATIONS HAVE FOR DEPRESSED AREAS, AND OTHER AREAS WHICH ARE CONSTRAINED IN DEVELOPMENT.

2. THE STATE OF ILLINOIS PROVIDE ALTERNATIVE ENERGY INFORMATION (CONTACTS, NEW TECHNOLOGY, RESEARCH RESULTS, FUNDING SOURCES) ON A REGULAR BASIS TO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATIONS, AND REGIONAL PLANNING AGENCIES.

E. IN ORDER TO ASSURE THAT THERE WILL BE ADEQUATE TRAINING AVAILABLE FOR INSTRUCTION IN THE OPERATIONS OF A DISTILLED SPIRITS PLANT, THE TASK FORCE RECOMMENDS:

THE STATE TAKE THE FOLLOWING ACTIONS:

1. ENCOURAGE ITS MANPOWER TRAINING AGENCIES TO FIND AND/OR TRAIN INSTRUCTORS TO PROVIDE TRAINING IN DISTILLED SPIRITS PLANT OPERATIONS, AND TO COORDINATE THESE EFFORTS WITH THE AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION SERVICE;

2. INVESTIGATE THE POSSIBILITY OF ESTABLISHING A CENTER OR CENTERS WITHIN ILLINOIS FOR ALCOHOL PRODUCTION TRAINING.

F. IN ORDER TO STRENGTHEN ILLINOIS' LEADERSHIP POSITION IN THE AREA OF ALCOHOL FUELS PRODUCTION, AND TO FACILITATE FUEL ALCOHOL PRODUCTION IN THE STATE, THE TASK FORCE RECOMMENDS:

1. THE STATE OF ILLINOIS COMMEND THOSE AGENCIES WHICH HAVE AIDED IN ENCOURAGING AND FACILITATING ALCOHOL PRODUCTION (PARTICULARLY THE BUREAU OF ALCOHOL, TOBACCO, AND FIREARMS), AND ENCOURAGE THEIR CONTINUED SUPPORT.

2. THE STATE OF ILLINOIS ESTABLISH A COOPERATIVE INTER-AGENCY GROUP (INCLUDING BOTH STATE AND FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AGENCIES) TO PROMOTE ECONOMIC AND ALTERNATIVE ENERGY DEVELOPMENT WITH ILLINOIS INDUSTRY, TO ATTRACT FEDERAL FUNDS FOR ALTERNATIVE ENERGY PROJECTS TO ILLINOIS, TO WORK WITH ILLINOIS' REPRESENTATIVES TO VARIOUS ALTERNATIVE GROUPS (FOR EXAMPLE, THE NATIONAL GASOHOL COMMISSION), AND TO FOSTER BETTER COOPERATION AND COORDINATION BETWEEN THE CONSTITUENT AGENCIES ON ALTERNATIVE ENERGY DEVELOPMENT AND RELATED MATTERS.

3. THE STATE PROMPTLY PAY DUES TO THE NATIONAL GASOHOL COMMISSION.

4. THE STATE ESTABLISH AN ALCOHOL FUELS PROGRAM IN THE ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE IN ORDER TO DRAW UPON ITS EXPERTISE, CONTACTS, AND LEADERSHIP.

housing and community development

The Context of Housing and Community Development

POLICIES

A. ESTABLISH AND/OR INCREASE THE COORDINATION OF STATE-SPONSORED HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS IN RURAL AREAS BY STATE AGENCIES.

B. ESTABLISH AND/OR INCREASE THE COORDINATION OF STATE HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT RESOURCES WITH THE PROGRAMS AND RESOURCES OF FEDERAL AGENCIES PROVIDING ASSISTANCE TO THE STATE'S RURAL AREAS.

C. ESTABLISH A POLICY OF STATE/FEDERAL/LOCAL COORDINATION BASED ON THE NEED TO ENSURE THAT RESOURCES ARE DIRECTED TO THE STATE'S MOST NEEDY POPULATION AREAS.

D. INCREASE THE ROLE OF RURAL AREA PLANNING COMMISSIONS AND COUNCILS IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT PLANNING AND PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION.

E. INCREASE THE ROLE OF RURAL COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCIES IN THE PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION OF STATE AND FEDERAL PROGRAMS.

PROBLEMS

While there has been an attempt, especially in the last year or two, by state and federal agencies to increase the coordination of housing and community development programs, much needs to be done if available resources are to be efficiently targeted into the most needy areas of the state. Although a number of agencies are engaged in limited resource management efforts, there is still a tendency for agencies to do so with little or no systematic communication or coordination. This causes obvious problems that range from missed opportunities for collaborative funding among agencies for local projects, to interagency coordinative problems, to confusion at the local level. More should be done to strengthen systematic communication and coordination among applicable federal and state agencies as they are engaged in managing their programmatic resources in rural areas. State governments play increasingly important roles in working with federal agencies in helping to manage resources. That essential state role should be given further support and recognition. Given the limited amount of resources that both the state and federal government have available and the current system of open competition for loans and grants between all communities in the state, it is often very difficult for the neediest communities to obtain funding. These needy communities often lack the staff capacity to write grant proposals or requests and, in many cases, often do not even know about funds that may be available. Several of our recommendations and policies address this important issue.

Rural area planning commissions and councils play a crucial role in the rural housing and community development process. Both state and federal agencies are often unaware of local and regional policy considerations that are made at the local level by the various communities and counties that support regional planning agencies. The increased coordination of federal, state and rural planning agency programs and objectives to help better manage housing and community development resources is one of the most important policy considerations of the Council.

Rural community action agencies also play a vital role in the community development process. There has not been a concerted effort by either the state or federal government to utilize the resources that rural community-based organizations have to offer. Many of the clients served by community action agencies qualify for state or federal assistance programs, and, through their outreach and advertising programs, many of the state's poor and underprivileged citizens could begin to gain access to the resources of the state and federal government. Community action has been especially effective in promoting federal housing programs on a limited basis and this effort needs to be strengthened and expanded.

RECOMMENDATIONS

A. IN ORDER TO ESTABLISH AND/OR INCREASE THE COORDINATION OF STATE-SPONSORED HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS IN RURAL AREAS BY STATE AGENCIES, THE TASK FORCE RECOMMENDS:

1) EACH STATE AGENCY DESIGNATE A RURAL PROGRAMS INTERAGENCY COORDINATOR. A SPECIFIC PERSON AND TELEPHONE NUMBER WOULD BE ESTABLISHED. THIS PERSON'S NAME AND NUMBER WILL BE PASSED ALONG TO ALL STATE AND FEDERAL AGENCIES, LOCAL AGENCIES AND COMMUNITIES. THIS PERSON WOULD SIMPLY HANDLE REFERRALS OR MAKE REFERRALS TO APPROPRIATE AGENCY PERSONNEL FROM OTHER STATE OR FEDERAL AGENCIES OR FROM LOCAL AGENCIES AND COMMUNITIES.

2) REGULAR MEETINGS OF THE STATE RURAL PLANNING COUNCIL CONTINUE AND INTERACTION INCREASE BETWEEN THE STATE RURAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE AND THE GOVERNOR'S SUB-CABINET COMMITTEES ON EMPLOYMENT AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES.

3) COUNCIL STAFF AND DLGA'S OFFICE OF HOUSING AND BUILDINGS INCREASE EFFORTS TO HELP RURAL PUBLIC HOUSING AUTHORITIES AND NOT-FOR-PROFIT DEVELOPERS IMPROVE THE RURAL HOUSING SUPPLY (THROUGH ADDITIONAL TRAINING SESSIONS).

B. IN ORDER TO ESTABLISH AND/OR INCREASE THE COORDINATION OF STATE HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT RESOURCES WITH THE PROGRAMS AND RESOURCES OF FEDERAL AGENCIES PROVIDING ASSISTANCE TO THE STATE'S RURAL AREAS, THE TASK FORCE RECOMMENDS:

1) A SPECIFIC STATE/HUD RURAL PROGRAM COORDINATOR BE DESIGNATED WITHIN HUD'S AREA OFFICE. THIS INDIVIDUAL WOULD ALSO REVIEW THE CURRENT SMALL CITIES PROGRAM (HUD) PROCEDURES WITH COUNCIL STAFF TO HELP IDENTIFY AREAS AND LANGUAGE THAT MIGHT BE SIMPLIFIED.

2) THE FEDERAL REGIONAL COUNCIL AND THE RURAL PLANNING COUNCIL ESTABLISH A WORKING RELATIONSHIP TO IMPROVE STATE/FEDERAL INTERAGENCY COOPERATION AND COORDINATION.

C. IN ORDER TO ESTABLISH STATE/FEDERAL/LOCAL COORDINATION BASED ON NEED TO INSURE THAT RESOURCES ARE DIRECTED TO THE STATE'S MOST NEEDY POPULATION AREAS, THE TASK FORCE RECOMMENDS:

1) FEDERAL USDA AGENCIES (FmHA, COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE, ETC.), STATE AGENCY RURAL COORDINATORS, AND REGIONAL PLANNING DIRECTORS INITIATE REGULAR MEETINGS (QUARTERLY) TO DISCUSS ONGOING PROJECTS AND NEEDS AND TO EXCHANGE INFORMATION.

2) THE COUNCIL AND STATE AGENCY RURAL COORDINATORS ESTABLISH A MANAGEMENT STRATEGY FOR MEETING THE NEEDS OF RURAL MINORITY GROUPS, WOMEN (ESPECIALLY HOUSEHOLD HEADS AND THE ELDERLY), AND MIGRANT FARM WORKERS.

3) THE COUNCIL AND RURAL STATE AGENCY COORDINATORS CONTINUE TO STRENGTHEN STATE/FEDERAL COMMUNICATION AND COORDINATION IN "MANAGING" RESOURCES AND DIRECTING THESE FUNDS AND PROGRAMS INTO THE NEEDIEST RURAL AREAS AND COMMUNITIES.

D. IN ORDER TO INCREASE THE ROLE OF RURAL AREA PLANNING COMMISSIONS AND COUNCILS IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT PLANNING AND PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION, THE TASK FORCE RECOMMENDS:

THE DEPARTMENT OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS BE OFFICIALLY DESIGNATED AS THE AGENCY FOR THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEW FEDERAL OR STATE GRANT OR LOAN PROGRAMS. THIS WOULD ALSO INCLUDE NOTIFYING SMALL COMMUNITIES WHEN EXISTING PROGRAM CHANGES TAKE PLACE. IF EACH STATE AND FEDERAL AGENCY WOULD WORK TOWARD THIS GOAL, THEN SMALL COMMUNITIES WILL HAVE TO CONTACT ONLY ONE AGENCY FOR GENERAL GRANTS INFORMATION. DLGA HAS BEEN DOING THIS KIND OF PROMOTIONAL WORK FOR SOME TIME WITH CONSIDERABLE SUCCESS AND THE AMOUNT AND KIND OF INFORMATION TO BE ANNOUNCED NEEDS TO BE INCREASED IF WE ARE TO BE EFFECTIVE.

E. IN ORDER TO INCREASE THE ROLE OF RURAL COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCIES IN THE PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION OF STATE AND FEDERAL PROGRAMS, THE TASK FORCE RECOMMENDS:

EACH STATE AGENCY REVIEW THE HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS THAT THEY ARE CURRENTLY OPERATING AND CONSIDER THE ESTABLISHMENT OF COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS WITH RURAL AREA COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCIES, ESPECIALLY IN THE AREAS OF PROGRAM ADVERTISING, ADVOCACY AND REFERRALS.

Land Use

POLICY

COORDINATE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS WITH THE LAND USE POLICIES OF THE COUNCIL'S NATURAL RESOURCES TASK FORCE AND THE FARMERS HOME ADMINISTRATION RESOURCE MANAGEMENT POLICIES.

PROBLEMS

Although the subject of land use policy is covered extensively in the task force report on natural resources, land use policy is also an important aspect of the housing and community development programs around the state. A large number of local government officials have expressed concern over the continued "sprawl" of housing subdivisions in prime farm areas around their respective communities. Many officials feel that developers and individuals have too long remained unconcerned about this problem and unaware of the benefits to both themselves and the community if the construction of housing and community facilities is undertaken within existing village boundaries. This "compact" development approach ensures that existing water and sewer facilities will be utilized and that new road construction, often built on farm land, will not take place. The community benefits from the increase in its tax base and the city or village retailers benefit from the increased population. The cost of public utility connection is reduced and cities and towns, especially those who encourage "in village" compact development, now have more incentive to invest in the improvement of existing public works, community facilities and development programs.

RECOMMENDATIONS

IN ORDER TO COORDINATE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS WITH THE LAND USE POLICIES OF THE COUNCIL'S NATURAL RESOURCES TASK FORCE AND THE FARMERS HOME ADMINISTRATION RESOURCE MANAGEMENT POLICIES, THE TASK FORCE RECOMMENDS:

1) STATE AGENCY RURAL COORDINATORS INITIATE MEETINGS TO DISCUSS THE EVENTUAL ADOPTION OF BOTH THE TASK FORCE REPORT ON LAND USE AND FmHA'S RESOURCE MANAGEMENT POLICY BY STATE AGENCIES.

2) STATE AGENCY TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE ACTIVITIES ENCOURAGE THE REHABILITATION AND RENOVATION OF EXISTING HOUSING THROUGH HUD AND FmHA PROGRAMS.

3) ASSISTANCE BE GIVEN TO REGIONAL PLANNING AGENCIES IN THE PREPARATION OF PROPOSED LAND USE POLICIES FOR THEIR REVIEW AND ADOPTION AT THE LOCAL LEVEL.

4) COMMUNITIES BE PROVIDED WITH UP-TO-DATE INFORMATION AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CONCERNING STATE/FEDERAL POLICY AND THE BENEFITS OF WISE LAND USE PROCEDURES.

Housing and Community Development Program Simplification

POLICY

ENCOURAGE STATE AND FEDERAL AGENCY SIMPLIFICATION OF PROCEDURES, FORMS AND REGULATIONS FOR HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS IN THE STATE'S RURAL AREAS.

PROBLEMS

Although many small communities are generally familiar with the state and federal agencies that provide funding for housing and community development programs, regulations are often confusing and difficult to understand. Small communities simply do not have the staff capacity to keep up with changes in programs and regulations and, often, do not have staff trained in grantsmanship. Small towns are continually confused by the conglomeration of dates, time frames for applications and reporting requirements.

RECOMMENDATIONS

IN ORDER TO ENCOURAGE STATE AND FEDERAL AGENCY SIMPLIFICATION OF PROCEDURES, FORMS AND REGULATIONS FOR HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS IN THE STATES RURAL AREAS, THE TASK FORCE RECOMMENDS:

1) THE ALLOCATION OF STATE FUNDS BE INCREASED TO BOTH REGIONAL AND AREAWIDE PLANNING COMMISSIONS AND DLGA FOR THE EXPANSION OF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE ACTIVITIES TO SMALL COMMUNITIES AND FOR AN INCREASED NUMBER OF WORKSHOPS AND SEMINARS FOR SMALL COMMUNITIES.

2) THE FARMERS HOME ADMINISTRATION BE ENCOURAGED TO CONTINUE ITS WORK WITH COUNCIL STAFF, LOCAL HOUSING AUTHORITIES, AND REGIONAL PLANNING AGENCIES IN DEVISING SIMPLIFIED PROCEDURES AND RECOMMENDATIONS TO USDA FOR STREAMLINING APPLICATIONS FOR THEIR SECTION 515 RURAL RENTAL HOUSING PROGRAM.

3) STANDARD FORMS, QUESTIONNAIRES AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE MATERIAL THAT IS ROUTINELY SENT TO SMALL COMMUNITIES BE REVIEWED. THIS MATERIAL MIGHT BE REVIEWED BY A "TEAM" OF AGENCY RURAL COORDINATORS WITH SPECIAL EMPHASIS PLACED ON SIMPLIFYING AND CLARIFYING LANGUAGE.

4) HUD ELIMINATE HOUSING ASSISTANCE PLAN REQUIREMENTS FOR PROJECTS INVOLVING WATER OR SEWER SYSTEMS IF THAT COMMUNITY HAS A CURRENT HOUSING ASSISTANCE PLAN IN EFFECT.

5) THE REQUIREMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENTS AND PROCEDURES BE RECONSIDERED IN THOSE INSTANCES WHEN COMMUNITIES ARE NOT INVOLVED IN PROJECTS THAT HAVE AN EFFECT ON THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT (E.G., HOUSING REHABILITATION, PURCHASE, DEMOLITION, ETC.).

3,

New Housing

POLICY

INCREASE THE AVAILABILITY OF SINGLE AND MULTI-FAMILY HOUSING IN THE STATE'S RURAL AREAS.

PROBLEM

There is an acute shortage of housing capital for the construction of new homes at a reasonable mortgage interest rate in the state's rural areas. The same is also true for the rehabilitation of existing housing. There is also a great need for additional construction of rental units for both the elderly and families throughout rural Illinois.

RECOMMENDATIONS

IN ORDER TO INCREASE THE AVAILABILITY OF SINGLE AND MULTI-FAMILY HOUSING IN THE STATE'S RURAL AREAS, THE TASK FORCE RECOMMENDS:

1) A RURAL HOUSING STRATEGY WITH THE ILLINOIS HOUSING DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY BE DEFINED FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF NEW SALES AND RENTAL HOUSING IN THE STATE'S RURAL AREAS.

2) THE OUTREACH PROGRAMS AND ADVERTISING OF FmHA HOUSING PROGRAMS CONTINUE TO EXPAND THROUGH THE DEPARTMENT OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS, AREAWIDE COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCIES AND REGIONAL PLANNING ORGANIZATIONS.

3) THE POSSIBILITY OF STATE-FUNDED RURAL HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS BE DISCUSSED WITH MEMBERS OF THE ILLINOIS HOUSE AND SENATE. STATES SUCH AS IOWA, NORTH CAROLINA AND PENNSYLVANIA HAVE SET ASIDE FUNDS FOR RURAL PROJECTS, AND EFFORTS SUCH AS THE HUD/USDA DEMONSTRATION PROJECT CLEARLY JUSTIFY A STRONGER STATE ROLE IN PROVIDING FUNDING RESOURCES TO HELP EXPAND AND CONTINUE EFFECTIVE RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.

HUD's Small Cities Program

POLICY

CONTINUE NEGOTIATIONS WITH HUD/WASHINGTON FOR A STRENGTHENED STATE ROLE IN THE ADMINISTRATION OF HUD'S SMALL CITIES PROGRAM.

PROBLEMS

The state has a particular interest in this program as it has been administering and managing its own small cities program for the past two years. It is one of the few HUD programs that is available strictly to rural areas. The state (DLGA) was awarded $500,000 to distribute (on a competitive basis) to rural communities for housing and community development projects. It was determined by DLGA at that time to limit grant amounts to small communities to $50,000.

As we have seen (in the Illinois Areawide Project), a grant award of $50,000 can have a very significant impact on a community with population less than 500. The impact of these projects has been community-wide, has involved a large proportion of the population in the planning and implementation phases, and has stimulated the community to invest in its own development. HUD persists, however, in allocating large sums of money for one- or two-year projects in very small communities because their poverty and substandard housing statistics are high. What apparently has not been recognized about these large grants to very small communities is that: 1) the availability of so much money combined with the emphasis on timely expenditures of grant funds results in less than optimal cost effectiveness (i.e., waste) with public monies, and 2) the impact of such massive federal spending in small localities may have more of a detrimental impact than beneficial impact on community cohesiveness, community self-reliance, and local considerations.

Another aspect of this program is that HUD appears to prefer to make a small number of large grants as opposed to a larger number of small grants. This can be understood in that it eases the administrative burden on HUD. However, what this means on the community level is that while one community receives funding, a neighboring community with nearly an identical situation and needs receives nothing. While recognizing that limited program resources cannot possibly meet all communities' needs, it certainly appears that a more equitable method could be found.

Another criticism of the Small Cities program is that it tends to foster a kind of welfare mentality among the state's communities by not reinforcing self-reliant actions to deal with local problems. As Small Cities funds require no match and are 100% grants, many localities elect to submit grant applications year after year for the same project hoping for funding. This contributes to an attitude that "we'll do something about the problem if we get funded. If they don't want to give us any money, we just won't do anything about it until they do." As a result, public facilities and housing needs may continue unaddressed for years.

A sliding scale limit on grant award amounts would help assure that grant assistance is compatible with the size and needs of the community. This sliding scale should be based on studies of the maximum impact and cost effectiveness that can be achieved in various-sized communities. An example of a sliding scale might be:

Community Population	Maximum Grant Amount	
0 - 500	$100,000	
500 - 1,000	175,000	EXAMPLE only.
1,000 - 2,500	250,000	Many other
2,500 - 5,000	325,000	variations
5,000 - 10,000	400,000	are possible.
10,000 - 25,000	500,000	
25,000 - 50,000	750,000	

While the establishment of such a sliding scale might be criticized for restricting funds to small communities, its purpose would be to help many more small communities and thus avoid the current process by which one town gets all of its needs addressed and another gets nothing.

Leveraging of additional local, state and federal resources would be encouraged by awarding points during project selection to those projects which are not 100% dependent on HUD monies. This process will also be helped by the previous recommendation of grant award size limitations as communities will not be able to expect 100% grant funding of large projects. This is another lesson learned by the Illinois Areawide Project where in several cases communities committed an amount nearly equal to the grant award to enable the construction of a needed community facility. The extent of commitment of other funds and the relative importance of local versus other state or federal commitments would need to be decided upon. Nonetheless, incorporating this procedure into the grant selection procedure could help stimulate community self-reliance and end the welfare mentality created by 100% grants.

A way should be found to equalize the importance of (a) housing, (b) public facilities, and (c) economic development projects. The present HUD ranking system, by its structure, ends up discriminating against sewer and water projects because they cannot effectively compete against housing projects which are often by definition of 100% benefit to lower-income persons. While some sewer and water projects may serve 40-50% lower-income persons, they are seldom funded. If this current ranking system is maintained, we will continue to see proliferation of housing programs, sometimes of questionable value, while the public facilities needs of small rural communities remain unaddressed.

RECOMMENDATIONS

IN ORDER TO CONTINUE NEGOTIATIONS WITH HUD/WASHINGTON FOR A STRENGTHENED STATE ROLE IN THE ADMINISTRATION OF HUD'S SMALL CITIES PROGRAM, THE TASK FORCE RECOMMENDS:

1) A SLIDING SCALE BE ESTABLISHED ON GRANT AWARD AMOUNTS TO HELP ASSURE THAT GRANT ASSISTANCE IS COMPATIBLE WITH THE SIZE AND NEEDS OF THE COMMUNITY.

2) LEVERAGING OF ADDITIONAL LOCAL, STATE AND FEDERAL RESOURCES BE ENCOURAGED BY AWARDING POINTS DURING PROJECT SELECTION TO THOSE PROJECTS WHICH ARE NOT 100 PERCENT DEPENDENT ON HUD MONIES.

3) A WAY BE FOUND TO EQUALIZE THE IMPORTANCE OF (A) HOUSING, (B) PUBLIC FACILITIES, AND (C) ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS.

human and social services

Introduction

POLICIES

A. ALLOW RURAL COMMUNITIES GREATER LOCAL DISCRETION IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF PROGRAMS.

B. DEVELOP MORE EFFICIENT AND FLEXIBLE PROGRAMS IN RURAL AREAS.

C. HELP PROVIDE EXPERTISE, "PACKAGE" TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO RURAL AREAS, AND ASSIST IN GRANT WRITING.

D. BETTER ALLOCATE LOCAL TAX DOLLARS.

E. ASSIST RURAL COMMUNITIES AND PROJECTS WITH CASH FLOW PROBLEMS.

F. REDUCE TERRITORIAL DISPUTES AND INCREASE COORDINATION AT THE COUNTY LEVEL.

G. FACILITATE STATEWIDE RURAL HUMAN AND SOCIAL SERVICES DISCUSSION AND PLANNING.

PROBLEMS

Basic differences exist between rural and urban areas which ultimately affect human service programs and the delivery of services. Because of unique circumstances, some of which are cited below, rural areas are often unable to take full advantage of human services. However, the Task Force reminds the state that all Illinois citizens are equally entitled to human and social services.

Rural human service problems may not be easily recognizable in a predominantly urban state like Illinois. As a consequence, urban problems may be dealt with more promptly. When rural problems are recognized and dealt with, the per capita costs of providing services are frequently greater than they are in urban areas, often due to distances between clients and service headquarters. Staff productivity may be lowered by time spent in travel and communications with a consequent negative effect on program results.

Mistrust may exist among residents of rural areas regarding human service programs, brought about and reinforced by the physical isolation of communities. The problem of mistrust makes it harder to reach and aid clients.

In addition, the automobile is the primary mode of rural transportation, and few transportation alternatives exist for rural residents. Consequently, the lack of auto transportation or its alternatives may make services less accessible to those persons in need of them. This problem may be compounded in the future by rising gasoline costs and shortages.

State and federal authorities with program funds allow little discretion to administrators at the local level who may have a better understanding of the rural situation. Given the unique problems, capacities, and technologies of rural areas, it might be well to allow greater discretion in the administration of what are frequently urban-oriented programs.

Day-to-day issues are the primary concern of part-time elected officials. Consequently, other issues are lower priority. Part-time officials sometimes do not have the time or expertise to deal consistently well with other levels of government (for instance, in the process of federal or state grant or loan applications). The problem is often related to the limited number of contacts with other levels of government. To further compound the problem, small communities may not have the funds available to hire expertise. Even when local leaders with expertise are available, they may find themselves with a heavy work load.

Rural communities often lack the fiscal resources to match state and/or federal contributions. As a result, communities with the greatest need may not receive needed programs. Because many rural communities have difficulty in raising funds or borrowing money, small rural programs frequently have cash flow programs, especially during program start-up.

The problem of lack of coordination exists among local, state and federal program levels. Territorial disputes are sometimes waged among agencies, and little effort is made to coordinate programs. In rural areas, where service gaps frequently appear, lack of coordination contributes to inefficiencies.

RECOMMENDATIONS

A. IN ORDER TO ALLOW RURAL COMMUNITIES GREATER LOCAL DISCRETION IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF PROGRAMS, THE TASK FORCE RECOMMENDS:

1) STATE AND FEDERAL AGENCIES ALLOW RURAL AREAS GREATER FLEXIBILITY IN THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATON OF PROGRAMS, ESPECIALLY IF THE SAME NET RESULT CAN BE ACHIEVED.

2) INCREASED STATE FUNDING TO RURAL COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCIES.

B. IN ORDER TO DEVELOP MORE EFFICIENT AND FLEXIBLE PROGRAMS IN RURAL AREAS, THE TASK FORCE RECOMMENDS:

PROGRAM PLANNERS, POLICY MAKERS, MONITORS AND EVALUATORS BE MADE AWARE OF THE SPECIAL RURAL CONDITIONS AND PROBLEMS.

C. IN ORDER TO HELP PROVIDE EXPERTISE, "PACKAGE" TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO RURAL AREAS AND ASSIST GRANT WRITING, THE TASK FORCE RECOMMENDS:

THE DEPARTMENT OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS EXPAND ITS FIELD STAFF AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE SERVICES.

D. IN ORDER TO BETTER ALLOCATE LOCAL TAX DOLLARS, THE TASK FORCE RECOMMENDS:

THE STATE ENCOURAGE AND HELP LOCAL GOVERNMENTS EXAMINE THEIR RESOURCES, BOTH PUBLIC AND PRIVATE. A GREATER KNOWLEDGE OF LOCAL RESOURCES WOULD ASSIST IN DEVELOPING LOCAL PLANS, POLICIES, AND DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES.

E. IN ORDER TO ASSIST RURAL COMMUNITIES AND PROJECTS WITH CASH FLOW PROBLEMS, THE TASK FORCE RECOMMENDS:

STATE AND FEDERAL AGENCIES PROVIDE TIMELY MONEY SUPPORT FOR THE INITIATION OF PROGRAMS. ONE SOLUTION WOULD BE TO REDUCE THE AMOUNT OF PAPERWORK AND "RED TAPE" REQUIRED FOR REIMBURSEMENT OR VOUCHER PROCEDURES.

F. IN ORDER TO REDUCE TERRITORIAL DISPUTES AND INCREASE COORDINATION AT THE COUNTY LEVEL, THE TASK FORCE RECOMMENDS:

EACH COUNTY DEVELOP A HUMAN SERVICES COUNCIL TO MEET AT REGULAR INTERVALS TO DISCUSS THE FUNCTIONING OF LOCAL HUMAN AND SOCIAL SERVICES.

G. IN ORDER TO FACILITATE STATEWIDE RURAL HUMAN AND SOCIAL SERVICES DISCUSSION AND PLANNING, THE TASK FORCE RECOMMENDS:

THE TASK FORCE ON HUMAN AND SOCIAL SERVICES BE CONTINUED AND THAT THE LARGER RURAL PLANNING COUNCIL BE CONTINUED AS WELL.

Health Care

(PUBLIC HEALTH; MENTAL HEALTH AND DISABILITIES)

A. PUBLIC HEALTH

POLICIES

A. PROVIDE BETTER PRIMARY CARE SERVICES FOR RURAL ILLINOIS.

B. PROVIDE ADEQUATE RURAL HOME HEALTH CARE.

C. DEFINE THE LEGAL STATUS OF MID-LEVEL PROVIDERS.

PROBLEMS

Many rural areas in Illinois have a severe lack of available and accessible health care resources. The categories of primary care services in which Illinois shows varying levels of shortages would appear to be primarily physician and dentist services, home health care, preventive services and emergency medical services in certain areas. Unsuccessful attempts to attract and hold solo practitioners illustrate the difficulty of retaining a single physician or dentist in one community.

A home health agency is a public or private organization which provides needed health care and supportive services to a sick or disabled person in his home surroundings. While home health care offers the advantage of reduced aggregate health care expenditures, it frequently requires out-of-pocket expenditures by the patient. Further, thirty-two rural counties in Illinois do not provide home health services.

The number of career choices in the health care field has mushroomed, especially in the last two decades, to a total now well over 200. Among these is a new category known as mid-level providers of health care. This includes primarily two new health professionals known as "Nurse Practitioners" and "Physician Assistants." The legal status of mid-level providers is currently a serious impediment to their popular and efficient utilization.

RECOMMENDATIONS

A. IN ORDER TO PROVIDE BETTER PRIMARY CARE SERVICES FOR RURAL ILLINOIS, THE TASK FORCE RECOMMENDS THAT:

1) THE STATE INTERVENE TO TRAIN PHYSICIANS FOR RURAL AREAS.

2) THE STATE ENABLE NURSE PRACTITIONERS AND PHYSICIAN ASSISTANTS TO PRACTICE IN HEALTH MANPOWER SHORTAGE AREAS.

3) EACH COUNTY CREATE A COUNTY-WIDE CONSORTIUM (A SINGLE AGENCY) FOR DELIVERY OF HEALTH SERVICES, THEREBY HOUSING PUBLIC HEALTH, TB, MENTAL HEALTH, ETC., UNDER ONE AUTHORITY.

4) THE DEPARTMENTS OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND TRANSPORTATION CONTINUE EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES TO PLACE MODERN EMERGENCY MEDICAL VEHICLES ON A MATCHING FUND BASIS AND TRAIN PERSONNEL.

5) RURAL AREAS BE ENCOURAGED TO USE THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION AND WELFARE'S FUNDING FOR PRIMARY HEALTH CARE SERVICES IN RURAL AREAS.

6) RURAL AREAS RECOGNIZE THE IMPORTANCE OF GROUP PRACTICE AND ENCOURAGE ITS PROMOTION.

B. IN ORDER TO PROVIDE ADEQUATE RURAL HOME HEALTH CARE, THE TASK FORCE RECOMMENDS THAT:

1) THE BRADY BILL BE ADOPTED TO SUPPORT HOME HEALTH AND HOME NURSING BY PROVIDING REIMBURSEMENT FOR THOSE INDIVIDUALS WHOSE MEDICARE IS EXHAUSTED AND THOSE WHO ARE DISALLOWED AS MEDICARE ELIGIBLE.

2) LOCAL HEALTH DEPARTMENTS ESTABLISH REFERRAL WITH PRIVATE HOME CARE AGENCIES FOR THE NON-ELIGIBLE MEDICARE POPULATION.

3) GOVERNMENT AND NON-GOVERNMENT AGENCIES EXPAND THEIR PRESENT REIMBURSEMENT POLICIES TO ALLOW COVERAGE OF HOME CARE SERVICES TO ALL AGE POPULATIONS.

4) LOCAL GOVERNMENTS ENCOURAGE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A COMMUNITY-BASED, CERTIFIED HOME HEALTH PROGRAM.

5) LOCAL GOVERNMENTS ENCOURAGE THE EXPANSION AND COORDINATION OF EXISTING HOME HEALTH SERVICES WITH NEARBY, UNSERVED COUNTIES.

RECOMMENDATIONS (cont'd)

C. IN ORDER TO DEFINE THE LEGAL STATUS OF MID-LEVEL PROVIDERS, THE TASK FORCE RECOMMENDS THAT:

1) THE STATE OF ILLINOIS AMEND THE ILLINOIS NURSE PRACTICE ACT TO DELINEATE THE QUALIFICATIONS OF A NURSE PRACTITIONER AND ALSO AMEND THE ILLINOIS MEDICAL PRACTICE ACT TO ALLOW PHYSICIAN ASSISTANTS TO WORK OFFSITE OF THE PHYSICIANS FOR WHOM THEY WORK. BOTH AMENDMENTS SHOULD ALLOW MID-LEVEL PROVIDERS TO CHARGE FOR THEIR SERVICES.

2) PHYSICIAN GROUP PRACTICES AND HOSPITALS BE ENCOURAGED TO ESTABLISH SATELLITE FACILITIES STAFFED BY MID-LEVEL PROVIDERS AND PRIMARY CARE PHYSICIANS IN RURAL AREAS.

B. MENTAL HEALTH AND DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

POLICIES

A. HELP RURAL COMMUNITIES MEET THE SERVICE DEMAND PRODUCED BY A POLICY OF DEINSTITUTIONALIZATION.

B. REDUCE THE COSTS OF RURAL CONGREGATE HOUSING CONSTRUCTION.

C. ENCOURAGE THE CONSTRUCTION OF RURAL CONGREGATE HOUSING.

D. IDENTIFY THOSE DEMANDS WHICH UNREALISTICALLY RAISE THE COST OF TREATMENT IN RURAL AREAS.

E. MAKE MENTAL HEALTH CARE AVAILABLE TO A LARGER NUMBER OF RURAL RESIDENTS.

F. FACILITATE AND ENCOURAGE COOPERATION AMONG EXISTING HUMAN SERVICE BOARDS.

PROBLEMS

A policy of deinstitutionalization may force rural areas (ill-equipped in housing, employment, and transportation services) to accept people with needs which cannot be adequately met by the community.

Congregate housing (i.e., group homes and sheltered care homes) fulfills supportive needs for "mainstreamed" clients with disabilities or those in need of mental health care. However, constraints exist which impede use of congregate housing in rural areas. For example, state safety and fire code regulations inhibit the use of existing housing and make construction of new facilities cost prohibitive. Also, limited local resources may discourage rural communities from constructing or renovating buildings for congregate housing.

The procedures of the new mental health code require uniform services of both urban and rural inpatient treatment facilities, resulting in higher treatment costs in rural areas.

Medicaid, under existing public aid rules, does not offer reimbursement for care of mental illness by providers other than physicians.

At present, counties may establish separate boards for review and/or contract of services in the areas of mental health (708 boards), public health (553 boards), and mental deficiencies (377 boards). These boards may not be aware of the full range of their powers and potential. For instance, 708 boards have the power to review all dollars spent in their jurisdictions for treatment and care of mental illness, alcoholism, and drug abuse, although they may not exercise these powers. In particular, 708 boards should be encouraged to act as planning and coordinating agencies.

RECOMMENDATIONS

A. IN ORDER TO HELP RURAL COMMUNITIES MEET THE SERVICE DEMAND PRODUCED BY A POLICY OF DEINSTITUTIONALIZATION, THE TASK FORCE RECOMMENDS THAT:

THE STATE RE-EXAMINE ITS MENTAL HEALTH EXPENDITURES IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE THE MOST EQUITABLE DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS BETWEEN INSTITUTIONS AND COMMUNITY-BASED SERVICES.

B. IN ORDER TO REDUCE THE COSTS OF RURAL CONGREGATE HOUSING CONSTRUCTION, THE TASK FORCE RECOMMENDS THAT:

THE STATE EXAMINE ITS REGULATIONS CONCERNING SAFETY REQUIREMENTS IN RURAL AREAS TO SEE IF THEY ARE UNDULY RESTRICTIVE OR COSTLY.

C. IN ORDER TO ENCOURAGE THE CONSTRUCTION OF RURAL CONGREGATE HOUSING, THE TASK FORCE RECOMMENDS THAT:

THE STATE OFFER GRANTS, LOW-INTEREST LOANS, AND MORTGAGE GUARANTEES FOR CONGREGATE HOUSING, AND ENCOURAGE THE USE OF EXISTING FEDERAL OR PRIVATE PROGRAMS BY RURAL COMMUNITIES TO DEVELOP SUCH HOUSING.

D. IN ORDER TO IDENTIFY THOSE DEMANDS WHICH UNREALISTICALLY RAISE THE COST OF TREATMENT IN RURAL AREAS, THE TASK FORCE RECOMMENDS THAT:

THE STATE RE-EVALUATE THE ASPECTS OF THE NEW MENTAL HEALTH CODE WHICH ADVERSELY AFFECT RURAL AREAS.

E. IN ORDER TO MAKE MENTAL HEALTH CARE AVAILABLE TO A LARGER NUMBER OF RURAL RESIDENTS, THE TASK FORCE RECOMMENDS THAT:

THE STATE RE-EXAMINE THE MEDICAID STATE PLAN ON THE ISSUE OF REIMBURSEMENT ONLY FOR CARE BY PHYSICIANS.

F. IN ORDER TO FACILITATE AND ENCOURAGE COOPERATION AMONG EXISTING HUMAN SERVICE BOARDS, THE TASK FORCE RECOMMENDS THAT:

THE STATE ALLOW COUNTIES WITH SEPARATE BOARDS (708, 553, 377 BOARDS) THE OPTION OF CONSOLIDATING THESE INTO ONE FUNCTIONAL BOARD RETAINING THE POWERS OF THE PREVIOUS BOARDS.

Issues Concerning The Elderly

POLICIES

A. MAINTAIN THE INCOME OF THE ELDERLY AND ENABLE THEM TO LEAD AN ACCEPTABLE LIFESTYLE.

B. HELP LOCAL GOVERNMENTS RECOUP REVENUE LOST DUE TO THE HOMESTEAD EXEMPTION ACT.

C. HELP RURAL REGIONS DEVELOP ADULT DAY CARE SERVICES.

D. INCREASE THE NUMBER OF MULTI-PURPOSE SENIOR CITIZEN CENTERS IN RURAL AREAS.

PROBLEMS

After retirement, the income of the elderly is lowered, and additional income sources become limited. Limited income suggests that some individuals may have difficulty in paying property taxes or utility bills.

While reducing the amount of taxes a homeowner (age 65+) pays on property, the Homestead Exemption Act reduces a portion of community revenue. In communities where the elderly population is substantial, the Homestead Exemption Act may have an effect on a community's ability to provide services.

In remote rural areas, adult day care services are difficult to implement, chiefly because of transportation problems and insufficient number of clientele.

Of the 79 rural counties, only 39 had at least one multi-purpose senior center. Because multi-purpose senior centers provide comprehensive, community-based supportive services to the elderly, the importance of the centers may increase in the future.

RECOMMENDATIONS

A. IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN THE INCOME OF THE ELDERLY AND ENABLE THEM TO LEAD AN ACCEPTABLE LIFESTYLE, THE TASK FORCE RECOMMENDS:

1) ENDORSEMENT OF THE CONCEPT OF "LIFELINE" LEGISLATION TO HELP THE ELDERLY, LOW-INCOME, AND DISABLED PAY UTILITY BILLS, CONDUCTED IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE WEATHERIZATION OF HOMES.

2) DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION CONCERNING THE REVERSE MORTGAGE LOAN ACT, AND ENCOURAGED USE OF THE PROGRAM.

3) THE USE OF THE "CIRCUIT BREATER" TAX RELIEF PROGRAM.

B. IN ORDER TO HELP LOCAL GOVERNMENTS RECOUP REVENUE LOST DUE TO THE HOMESTEAD EXEMPTION ACT, THE TASK FORCE RECOMMENDS THAT:

THE STATE BE REQUIRED TO MAKE IN LIEU PAYMENTS TO LOCAL GOVERNMENTS TO COVER THE COST OF LOST REVENUES FROM THE HOMESTEAD EXEMPTION ACT.

C. IN ORDER TO HELP RURAL REGIONS DEVELOP ADULT DAY CARE SERVICES, THE TASK FORCE RECOMMENDS THAT:

1) THE STATE CONTRIBUTE REVENUE SHARING FUNDS TO COUNTIES FOR THE SUPPORT OF ADULT DAY CARE.

2) THE STATE REDUCE THE NUMBER OF RULES AND REGULATIONS FROM VARIOUS AGENCIES TO ALLOW GREATER FLEXIBILITY IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF ADULT DAY CARE AND OTHER PROGRAMS AT THE LOCAL LEVEL.

D. IN ORDER TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF MULTI-PURPOSE SENIOR CITIZEN CENTERS IN RURAL AREAS, THE TASK FORCE RECOMMENDS THAT:

RURAL COMMUNITIES BE ENCOURAGED TO ESTABLISH MULTI-PURPOSE SENIOR CITIZEN CENTERS WITH STATE, FEDERAL, AND PRIVATE ASSISTANCE.

Public Assistance to the Low Income

POLICIES

A. REDUCE SERVICE DUPLICATION AND INCREASE ADMINISTRATIVE EFFICIENCY.

B. PROVIDE PUBLIC AID RECIPIENTS WITH GREATER PRIVACY.

PROBLEMS

The Department of Public Aid, the Department on Aging, and the Department of Children and Family Services all provide housekeeping and homemaking services in rural areas.

Because public aid recipients are highly visible in small rural communities, the privacy of clientele is of particular concern.

RECOMMENDATIONS

A. IN ORDER TO REDUCE SERVICE DUPLICATION AND INCREASE ADMINISTRATIVE EFFICIENCY, THE TASK FORCE RECOMMENDS THAT:

THE THREE DEPARTMENTS (PUBLIC AID, AGING, AND CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES) CONSIDER COOPERATION AT THE LOCAL LEVEL IN THE PROVISION OF HOUSEKEEPING AND HOMEMAKING SERVICES. ONE DEPARTMENT COULD BE SELECTED TO OFFER THE SERVICES OR A PRIVATE AGENCY COULD BE DESIGNATED AND CONTRACTED TO PROVIDE THEM.

B. IN ORDER TO PROVIDE PUBLIC AID RECIPIENTS WITH GREATER PRIVACY, THE TASK FORCE RECOMMENDS THAT:

PUBLIC AID CONSIDER WAYS TO IMPROVE CONFIDENTIALITY IN RURAL AREAS.

Children Services

POLICIES

A. PROVIDE BETTER ACCESS TO CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES.

B. IMPROVE DAY CARE OPERATIONS IN RURAL AREAS.

C. REDUCE THE CASH FLOW PROBLEMS OF SMALL DAY CARE CENTERS IN RURAL AREAS.

PROBLEMS

Although there are nearly 100 field offices of the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS), most offices are located in the larger communities. Consequently, DCFS offices are less accessible to persons living in rural areas.

Current licensing requirements may create costly and untenable demands on rural day care operations. Rural areas are faced with the problems of lack of the voluntary dollar, population dispersion, and high transportation costs. The low volume of clientele increases costs and indirectly makes compliance with fire, nutrition, and safety regulations difficult.

Because of late payments, small day care centers in rural areas may have cash flow and reimbursement problems.

RECOMMENDATIONS

A. IN ORDER TO PROVIDE BETTER ACCESS TO CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES, THE TASK FORCE RECOMMENDS THAT:

WHERE DCFS FIELD OFFICES ARE NOT EASILY ACCESSIBLE TO RURAL RESIDENTS, ANOTHER AGENCY (FOR INSTANCE, THE LOCAL CAP AGENCY) BE DESIGNATED TO ACT AS A CENTRAL CONTACT AND REFERRAL POINT.

RECOMMENDATIONS (cont'd)

B. IN ORDER TO IMPROVE DAY CARE OPERATIONS IN RURAL AREAS, THE TASK FORCE RECOMMENDS THAT:

1) THE DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES CHANGE THE LICENSING REQUIREMENTS OF RURAL DAY CARE CENTERS TO ACCOUNT FOR THE UNIQUE PROBLEMS OF DAY CARE PROVISION IN RURAL AREAS.

2) DCFS TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE LACK OF THE VOLUNTARY DOLLAR AND TRAVEL COSTS, IN ADDITION TO POPULATION SIZE AND CASELOAD, WHEN DETERMINING CASEWORKER ALLOCATION TO RURAL AREAS.

C. IN ORDER TO REDUCE CASH FLOW PROBLEMS OF SMALL DAY CARE CENTERS IN RURAL AREAS, THE TASK FORCE ENCOURAGES:

FASTER REIMBURSEMENT OF MONIES BY AGENCIES, PARTICULARLY PUBLIC AID, TO DAY CARE CENTERS.

Rural Transportion

POLICIES

A. ESTABLISH MORE COORDINATION AMONG RURAL HUMAN SERVICE AGENCIES OFFERING TRANSPORTATION.

B. REMOVE THE INSURANCE BARRIERS INHIBITING THE USE OF THE SCHOOL BUS SYSTEM FOR OTHER TRANSPORTATION.

C. KEEP TRANSPORT VEHICLES IN OPERATION OVER LONG-DISTANCE ROUTES.

D. FORM A CONCERTED POLICY TOWARD RURAL TRANSPORTATION.

PROBLEMS

In some rural counties, social service agencies, such as Head Start, the Senior Citizens Center, and the agency for the handicapped, may all have separate transportation systems. The lack of coordination among these scattered transportation systems may result in either service duplication or service gaps. In some instances, a program has off-duty vehicles standing idle when they could be used by another program. A major obstacle to efficient use of vehicles is the absence of a method of reimbursement from one agency to another for use of vehicles.

The greatest barrier to use of the school bus system for other rural transportation needs is the cost of insurance coverage. Insurance coverage in general is an expensive and often variable cost for rural transportation systems.

The maintenance of vehicles is of particular concern in rural areas. Often a long-distance trip by the transportation system's maintenance crew is necessary to aid a disabled vehicle. Many rural systems lack their own maintenance facilities.

At present, the Illinois Department of Transportation does not have a concerted policy toward rural public transportation. There is some concern that urban public transportation systems receive first funding priority. With the possible decline of interurban bus and rail service, rural transportation will further suffer while the transportation needs of rural residents will remain.

RECOMMENDATIONS

A. IN ORDER TO ESTABLISH MORE COORDINATION AMONG RURAL HUMAN SERVICE AGENCIES OFFERING TRANSPORTATION, THE TASK FORCE RECOMMENDS:

1) MANDATED COORDINATION OF RURAL TRANSPORTATION SERVICES BY GUBERNATORIAL ACTION, COOPERATION AMONG STATE AGENCY DIRECTORS, OR LEGISLATIVE ACTION.

2) PASSAGE OF HOUSE BILL 1183 (OBLINGER-WINCHESTER SPONSORS) TO REIMBURSE PART OF THE COST OF PROVIDING PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION SERVICE FOR ELDERLY PERSONS NOT SERVED BY MASS TRANSPORTATION CARRIERS.

3) SOCIAL SERVICE AGENCIES DEVELOP A REIMBURSEMENT METHOD FOR SHARING VEHICLES.

B. IN ORDER TO REMOVE THE INSURANCE BARRIERS INHIBITING THE USE OF THE SCHOOL BUS SYSTEM FOR OTHER TRANSPORTATION, THE TASK FORCE RECOMMENDS THAT:

1) THE ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF INSURANCE ENCOURAGE THE DEVELOPMENT OF MORE ACCURATE ACTUARIAL INFORMATION CONCERNING SPECIFIC USERS OF PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION (E.G., THE ELDERLY) AS THE BASIS FOR MORE EQUITABLE INSURANCE RATES.

2) SCHOOL BOARDS BE RELIEVED OF LIABILITY, AND THE SCHOOL BUS SYSTEM USED FOR OTHER RURAL TRANSPORTATION NEEDS.

3) RURAL TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS REDUCE THEIR INSURANCE RATES BY THE SPECIAL TRAINING OF EMPLOYEES AND THE SELECTION OF SPECIAL AGE GROUPS AS DRIVERS.

C. IN ORDER TO KEEP TRANSPORT VEHICLES IN OPERATION OVER LONG-DISTANCE ROUTES, THE TASK FORCE RECOMMENDS THAT:

A MAINTENANCE MODEL BE DEVELOPED FOR RURAL TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS. ONE ALTERNATIVE IS THAT ALL AREA TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS (SCHOOL, SENIOR CITIZENS, HANDICAPPED, OTHERS) POOL THEIR VEHICLES INTO A SHARED MAINTENANCE AGREEMENT FOR ALL GROUPS.

D. IN ORDER TO FORM A CONCERTED POLICY TOWARD RURAL TRANSPORTATION, THE TASK FORCE RECOMMENDS THAT:

1) THE ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (IDOT) DEVELOP POLICIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS TO IMPROVE THE ACCESSIBILITY OF REASONABLY PRICED RURAL PARATRANSIT AND PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION.

2) IN ADMINISTRATION OF RURAL PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION (SECTION 18), IDOT ENCOURAGE THE COORDINATION OF EXISTING RURAL TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS.

RECOMMENDATIONS (cont'd)

3) IDOT GIVE PRIORITY IN FUTURE EQUIPMENT FUNDING TO GENERAL OR SHARED USE PROGRAMMING IN RURAL AREAS, AND COORDINATE THIS PROGRAM WITH OTHER STATE AGENCIES.

4) IDOT STUDY RURAL PUBLIC TRANSIT. TO BEGIN, IDOT SHOULD REPORT ITS ASSESSMENT OF THE PILOT RURAL PUBLIC TRANSIT PROJECT IN ELIZABETHTOWN, AND ANY GENERALIZATIONS THAT MAY BE DRAWN FROM THE EXPERIENCE.

5) A STATEWIDE TASK FORCE ON RURAL PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION BE ESTABLISHED.

Human Service Delivery In General

A. ORGANIZATION AND ADMINISTRATION

POLICIES

A. INCREASE EFFICIENCY AND REDUCE ADMINISTRATIVE FUNCTIONS.

B. MAKE STATE AGENCIES MORE RESPONSIVE TO LOCAL CONDITIONS.

PROBLEMS

Numerous independent human services agencies suggest inefficiencies in human service delivery at the state level. A larger superagency or several larger agencies would simplify bookkeeping and bring the benefits of economies of scale.

State agencies, through their plans, policies and programs, are not sufficiently responsive to rural conditions.

RECOMMENDATIONS

A. IN ORDER TO INCREASE EFFICIENCY AND REDUCE ADMINISTRATIVE FUNCTIONS, THE TASK FORCE RECOMMENDS THAT:

BY EXECUTIVE ORDER, AND THE APPROVAL OF THE LEGISLATURE, THE STATE CONSOLIDATE ITS HUMAN SERVICE AGENCIES INTO ONE LARGER SUPERAGENCY OR INTO SEVERAL LARGER AGENCIES.

B. IN ORDER TO MAKE STATE AGENCIES MORE RESPONSIVE TO LOCAL CONDITIONS, THE TASK FORCE RECOMMENDS:

1) GREATER RELIANCE BE PLACED ON UNIFORM SUB-STATE AREAS IN AGENCY PROGRAM PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION.

2) A SINGLE OUTREACH ORGANIZATION BE DESIGNATED AT THE NEIGHBORHOOD OR COUNTY LEVEL, TO HANDLE REFERRALS TO THE HUMAN SERVICE SYSTEM. IN ADDITION, REGIONAL PLANNING AGENCIES (OR OTHER AGENCIES) SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED TO DEVELOP AND PUBLISH A SOCIAL SERVICE DIRECTORY FOR EACH COUNTY OR SUB-STATE REGION.

B. EQUITY

POLICY

ENSURE THAT RURAL AREAS RECEIVE AN EQUITABLE SHARE OF THE STATE'S HUMAN AND SOCIAL SERVICES.

PROBLEMS

The equitable distribution of funds among the state's regions is a complex issue. Some regions appear reluctant to accept public aid, but more receptive to funds for persons with special characteristics, such as the aged. This may either be a reflection of regional values or the inadequacy of agency outreach to clients in need. The isolation and inaccessibility of clients is perhaps more acute in rural areas than in urban areas.

RECOMMENDATION

IN ORDER TO ENSURE THAT RURAL AREAS RECEIVE AN EQUITABLE SHARE OF THE STATE'S HUMAN AND SOCIAL SERVICES, THE TASK FORCE RECOMMENDS THAT:

HUMAN SERVICE AGENCIES EXPAND RURAL OUTREACH PROGRAMS.